

The Republican.

No. 16, Vol. 8.] LONDON, Friday, Oct. 24, 1823. [PRICE 6d.

TO MRS. ELIZABETH FRY, OF ST. MILDRED'S
COURT, LONDON.

Dorchester Gaol, Oct. 16, in the fifth
year of my imprisonment, for being
more than a Christian.

MADAM,

THAT you have sufficient virtue to desire to increase the amount of happiness among mankind is unquestionable: that you are moral, and desire to see others moral, in the highest degree, your every action evinces: that you follow misery wherever you know it to exist, and endeavour to abolish the cause of it, is admitted to be your characteristic: and that such amiable traits make up the sum of your life, the history of the past and the present records. With this knowledge of your character, I select your name, as that of a member of the Society of Friends, commonly called Quakers, to address my views of that sect to the public. And here I am happy to say, that I can address you free from all those stimulants to reproach, which I feel when referring to the great mass of Christian Sects; and that, because you do not persecute, you do not reproach, you do not defame. Mutual and general moral instruction seems to be the characteristic of your Society, and where moral correction is demanded moral means are used.

The Quakers, as a distinct sect, have existed near two hundred years; and though I question the good foundation of your society, and the correctness of your views as to

Printed and Published by R. Carlile, 84, Fleet Street.

spiritual impulses, I am free to admit, that the general morality and modesty of manners, the peaceable disposition and the indifference which you exhibit towards some of the customs and habits of those among whom you live, have done much to lessen the amount of sectarian persecution, and to ameliorate the aggregate character of our species.

There are only two grounds upon which I can combat the character and pretensions of the Society of Friends: the first, is their alleged and fancied spiritual impulses: the second, their sectarianism or monopoly of interests as a sect.

First, as to the spiritual impulses.

The Quakers, I understand, respect but little of the Bible beyond its moral parts. Considering themselves to be under spiritual influences, or to have direct communion with supernatural power, their mode of worship has no settled form and they wait the impulse of their feelings to speak, and often meet in their Chapels and separate without any kind of discourse. My object is here to combat this alleged influence of the spirit and supernatural power: and as I object nothing to the character of this part of their pretensions, as offensive in any degree, I shall consider the subject in relation to the improved knowledge of the age upon the human body.

When George Fox first obtained the appellation of *Quaker*, it is a question, if there was a human being in existence, who knew that an animal was a simple material substance. The common notion was, and has been for many centuries, that man was a compound of matter and spirit. It is this word *spirit* which I combat, and shall prove that it is nothing more than a fluid matter.

The anatomist finds, that man and every other animal is a machine of pipes, through which a constant variety of fluid matter circulates, and keeps up what we call *life*. It is to furnish those pipes with the necessary quantity of fluid matter, to keep the machine in motion, that the stomach requires food. If we do not take food enough, or

of the proper quality, or if we burthen the stomach with too much, we endanger the motion of the machine, and the stoppage of its motion is what we call *death*. Upon this view of the human body, every principle of its action can be accounted for. The bones are the larger pipes and give the figure to the body; the muscles, the nerves, the veins, the arteries, the fibres, to an almost infinite numerical extent, make up the remainder of the body. Every fibre is a duct for this fluid matter, and every part of the body is in constant motion and change. What we have been accustomed to call *spirit* is nothing more than a *word* which our ignorance has adopted: and the *word* has no relation to any part or quality of the body.

But we have sensations? Yes. And those sensations are subject to different degrees of excitement by different objects? Yes. But it is this natural excitement upon the nerves, which you Quakers, and others, call the working of the spirit.

We trace all our sensations to our nerves. The brain has been called the seat of sensation; and so it may be, generally speaking, for it is the root of the nerves. The nerves are fed from the brain with that fluid which pervades them; but the brain has no particular qualities separate from being the root of the nerves. Physiologists have attributed too much to the brain. Gall and Spurzheim make it the centre of the human character, or the seat of all the passions; and attribute the variance of character or passion to a variance in the brain. Rennel retorts upon Lawrence that *medullary matter cannot think*. I readily grant that medullary matter cannot think, but medullary matter feeds those organs which are the organs of thought: that is, the nerves. If we view the brain as the root subservient to the nerves which branch from it, we then see that it has no character separate from those nerves. We do not say that medullary, or any kind of matter, thinks; but we say, that it is the organization, which the medullary matter feeds, that thinks. The pipes of an organ do not in themselves constitute music: it is the organization

of the pipes, and a particular action upon that organization, a passing of fluid matter through the pipes, that constitutes the music.

What is our speech? A passing of air through the pipes of the throat, and an action upon that passage of air with the tongue, the roof of the mouth, the teeth and the lips. We vary our sounds and reduce them to signs. Examine the human body any way, you can make nothing more of it than a machine of pipes.

This is examining the matter fairly; and this, Madam, you see, leaves no room for that nondescript which our ignorance has led us to call *soul* and *spirit*. We have a most correct conception how fluid matter can pass through the smallest pipe of the human body; but we have no conception how, a thing to be called soul or spirit, can dwell in any one, or in all those pipes.

Blood is not the only fluid which keeps up a constant circulation in our bodies; there are fluids of various kinds in constant circulation: and this aggregate circulation of fluids keeps up what we call *life and health*.

Disease is an obstruction of the circulation of some portion of the fluids, generally arising from an impure state of the particular fluid or fluids: and unless we can correct the state of those fluids, lingering disease or death is certain.

I have just finished reading a volume written by an Italian physician, Belloste, in which there is a treatise setting forth Mercury, in its crude or metallic state, as a remedy for most diseases, from its particular powers to cleanse the fluids from all impurities: and I am assured, by a private individual, from this book having fallen into his hands, that he has performed some wonderful cures: the first of which was on his own wife, who had such an obstruction as produced an abscess in the side, who had been pronounced a dead woman by Sir William Blizard, and had taken leave of her children under the expectation of immediate death. Of this mercury, which is vulgarly called *quicksilver* in this country among the unscientific, Belloste states, that he has given

two pounds weight at one time; and in one instance, where the two pounds did not clear the obstruction, he added three pounds more and succeeded; that is, *five pounds of quick-silver in one body!* The ignorant people of this country look at it as a poison, and I believe are taught that it is poison: Bellosté states, that in its crude state, it is the most harmless medicine used; that no quantity of it will produce that dreadful salivation which it produces when sublimed. It is only in its corroded or sublimed state, that it acts as a strong poison. He narrates some astonishing cures which he performed with it.

This medical subject is foreign to what I have to offer to you, Madam; but, the object is the same; and, writing upon the fluids of the body, and the diseases which their impurities occasion, impelled me to notice this alleged remedy. In any hopeless state of disease, I advise its trial: or to whomsoever is diseased and may find the resolution to make the experiment. If our medical men knew any general remedy they would not divulge it. Doctor-craft is just as mischievous as Priestcraft; there is just the same species of ignorance and mystery among the majority of medical men, as among the priests: in short, the medical man, who has any notions about a *soul* or *spirit*, must be ignorant of the first principles of his science, his profession.

Understanding, or being positive, that the human body is a machine of pipes filled with circulating fluids; and that the proper circulation of those fluids all over the body is the criterion of health; it follows, that the remedy which shall correct the circulation, is the remedy for all diseases. Regulate the circulation of the fluids, and nature will heal all the wounds that are inflicted upon her of herself.

I have gone thus far into the subject of the component parts of the human body, because, it is the proper introduction to what I have to say to you about those influences which the Quakers mistake for the working of the spirit. They speak in public only when they feel the impulse to speak: and this they fancy is the result of some external

action upon them. I proceed to shew that such is not the case.

That particular machine of pipes which we call man, in so far as he has a different organization, he has sensations different from other animals: and those sensations vary with the extent of his knowledge. There are men now sufficiently wise to trace almost every sensation to its cause; whilst ignorant men are acted upon, they know not how; and of every thing relating to their internal economy, they are as ignorant as other animals. The human body is capable of exciting itself by reflections on different objects, agreeable or disagreeable. A Quaker is accustomed to reflect on different parts, of what he calls his religion, or his knowledge; that reflection produces an excitement, and he feels a desire to speak upon the subject, because, the custom of his church allows him to rise and speak on such conditions and occasions: and so far from the act arising from any external influence, it is wholly the result of habit and example. Every orator is actuated by similar principles: he first feels the excitement to rise and speak; and when he has begun to speak, the excitement is increased, and he is led on to speak for hours, according to the fashion of the day, which is a very bad one: for long speeches have seldom much sense in them. A man should always have a subject to speak upon and never deviate from, nor exhaust, that subject. In any other sense than for instruction, speech-making is a folly, if not a vice.

The nerves are the seat of the passions: and I doubt much, whether, the heart, to which so much has been attributed, has any thing at all to do with them: beyond what relation it has to the nervous system, and as it may be influenced by an action upon the circulation of the blood. The passions are various; but those which are more frequently called into action are the passions of *desire* and *fear*. *Desire* to increase the well-being of the body as a whole, and even the gratification of other passions. *Fear* that some

evil impends over the body; or that some obstruction will be opposed to its desired gratifications.

Your religion has taught you, that the life of the human being is immortal: and though you have no experimental proofs that it is so, you desire and fear that it may be so: and conditions are held out by your religion, that the conduct of this life is conducive to pleasure or pain after death, according as your actions have been good or evil. The more you think upon this subject and these conditions, the more you desire the *pleasure*: and those who think seriously upon the matter will necessarily so regulate their conduct as to acquire it. So far as this influence may increase the amount of morality it is good: but it is fundamentally incorrect as a necessary moral incentive. The *religion is error*, for it has not the least support in the human knowledge of the nature of things; and separate from that knowledge, we are nothing superior to other animals, none of whom, I engage to say, have any knowledge about immortal life.

It is this operation upon the passions, by false imaginations, that has eventually formed the sect of Quakers: and by reading a great deal about the influence of the spirit in their religious books, they have been led to believe that they are really and truly influenced by some supernatural power. So thinks every man who really fancies that he feels religious influences. But the whole of this sensation is the result of ignorance: a want of knowing the source of our sensations. The motion of a Quaker's spirit is the result of meditation upon a particular subject: and when the spirit does not move, it proves no more, than, that his mind has been at ease and has not been excited by any particular subject. This is a matter upon which one person cannot give another experimental proofs: but where every person may personally obtain those experimental proofs, by examining the causes which have led to what he or she fancies to be a motion of the spirit.

This spirit, or working of the spirit, is nothing more than the action of that fluid which I have described as filling the

nerves: but to give a scientific description of its precise action and how it is influenced cannot yet be done. The discovery of the circulation of the blood was considered something wonderful; but there are many more wonderful things which belong to the human body, and to other animal bodies, yet to be discovered. And religion, instead of encouraging a search for these hidden matters, seeks to frustrate the attempt, by proclaiming:—it is enough that ye follow my ever-varying dictates.

The only means of detecting their errors which I can recommend to the Quakers, is, to seek a scientific knowledge of themselves, as far as science has yet gone, and of all the existences which they see about them: and trust nothing to the occult faculties of the body. Their spirit-working is yet an occult faculty of the body: and why should they invent causes for it, of which they cannot, delineate a proof of reality, nor even the most faint description? They dwell wholly upon words without knowing to what those words relate: and that dwelling upon words is a proof of nothing but their ignorance. Was there a reality of that which the Quakers and others call spirit, it would come within the knowledge of all mankind, and all would assent: but out of this use of foolish words, and this gross ignorance of what they talk and write about, comes that horrid sectarianism which keeps the whole of the human race who are subject to it, in a state of warfare.

This state of things is a cause sufficient why all these sects should set about examining the foundation of their sectarianism: and if they did this, they would soon find that *ignorance was the parent cause*. Upon a foundation of error, they build a fabric of error, and dwell in it throughout life; without knowing how much it detracts from their happiness and well being. The immortal life becomes a blank; and after this has passed, the time for looking back upon their errors has passed.

I have said that religion is not the proper moral incentive and I will give some explanation on the subject.

It is a mistaken notion with the professors of religion to suppose that such profession is an indication of morality, and that without such a profession, they do not stand fair in the eyes of their neighbours. This notion is the parent of hypocrisy, but not one atom does it add to the amount of morality. Religion is wholly a matter of profession; and whatever be the actions of the individual, they can never be made a test whether the actor be or be not a hypocrite; because, religion has nothing to do with actions between man and man, it has nothing to do with church or chapel-going—nothing to do with public prayer and psalm-singing—nothing to do with sermon-hearing—a man may be the most religious of men without observing any of these things; and in fact, I can never see any object in the ceremonial part of religion, but a taxation upon those who attend to it—a trade for the priest. To suppose that one man can be a religious mediator for another man, is to encourage immorality; for, certainly, the man who is strictly moral can have no need of a mediator. And it is here, Madam; it is in this part of the character of the Quakers, that they stand superior to all other sects. You do not act as mediators in religion for each other. It is here that your sect stands more free of hypocrisy than any other sect. Every one stands or falls upon his or her own moral conduct.

Having shewn that religion, as viewed between man and man, is made up wholly of profession, and that any kind of action can prove nothing with regard to the purity of religious pretensions; I will now shew that morality is its reverse, and that instead of being seen in professions, it can be seen in nothing but actions. Actions alone are indicative of morality—professions indicate nothing. As man can only be moral in relation to his conduct towards his fellow man: he can only be religious in relation to his ideas of the great whole of nature, or of that power which he conceives to be the cause of his life—to be his maker. These are statements that will bear examination: and hence it follows *that religion and morality are as distinct as man and his maker.*

Now unless man has a certain knowledge of what he worships—unless he knows it scientifically and can satisfactorily explain to himself the object of his adoration, he must be an idolator—he worships a thing made in the imagination of himself and others, and separate from such imaginations, he knows not what he worships. It follows, therefore, that he, who the most ardently explores the causes and effects of the existences which surround him and of his own existence, has the highest claim to be considered a religious man, even though he may make no pretensions to the use of the word *religion*: and the discoveries which he may make can scarcely fail to have a strong moral influence upon mankind, even though he make no pretensions to morality.

But the grand incentive to morality is the knowledge that we benefit by it. In doing good to others, wherever it can be done without injury to ourselves, we may be assured that benefit will redound upon ourselves. It is to the interest of every man to promote the greatest amount of morality, because, in so doing, he cannot fail to add something to his own welfare. If this were not a certain rule, there would be no morality among mankind: there would be no moral incentive. Every prudent man makes himself the centre of the universe and draws around him the greatest amount of bland influences. To do this, he sees that it is to his advantage to improve the character of all his fellow beings, and he labours to that end, just so far as he can do it without an immediate lessening of his present advantages. Some will go a little beyond this mark; others will not come quite up to it; corresponding with their ruling passions.

There are other moral incentives which arise from animal sympathy: but these are wholly capricious and never to be relied upon, as they are always surrounded with and often spring from latent motives. Under this species of moral incentive, I class your prison exertions; and though I most readily admit that you have done, and cannot fail to do good, I can see imperfections in the conduct by which you

are, in those instances, guided and those imperfections exist in your not clearly understanding *the differences between morality and religion.*

Reports say, that you visit Newgate weekly: that you read chapters from the New Testament to the female prisoners: that you encourage them to be industrious, and see that their good conduct is properly rewarded. So far as this conduces to the morality of those prisoners, it is a decided good: so far as it makes them industrious and sensible of the bad effects of dishonesty, it does good: and the only part of your conduct which I feel disposed to impeach is, your saying any thing to them about religion—about a subject upon which you cannot make them sensible; because you *yourself positively know nothing true upon the matter to communicate to them.*

I lately challenged the Chaplain of this Gaol: that, if he and I were to take two thieves under our moral instruction, for any given time, I would engage to turn out mine the better man. My calculations were made upon this ground, I yield the present Chaplain the meed of the highest order of morality; but I knew that as well as moral instruction, he would talk a great deal to his man about religion; and this would only distract the man's mind and lessen the force of the moral instruction: whilst I, on the other hand, would introduce nothing to the mind of my man, but that of which I could make him sensible. I would first make him sensible of the nature of property; then of industry; then that his advantages would have been greater if he had sought property or subsistence by industry, instead of stealing it: and after a course of lectures of this kind, without introducing a word of which the man was not fully sensible; after making him converse with me and reason with himself, I would engage that my man should never after be a thief; and that would be doing more than any chaplain ever did for a prisoner; and more I fear, Mrs. Fry, than ever you by your kindness to a prisoner, have done. I yield to you the meed of good

design: but I charge an incapacity for the object you have in view.

For instance: I have heard of your reading to the female prisoners, those chapters of the New Testament, about the seven devils being cast out of Mary Magdalene, about the woman taken in adultery, and so forth. Now, your pupils may listen and ponder; but I take upon myself to say, that they cannot understand, nor ever be the wiser for such lessons. Such kind of instruction becomes a solemn mockery. Induce them to knit, to sew, or to weave, and find them a ready money market for their produce, and you make them sensible of something. Calculate with them how much per week they can earn by their industry, and what comforts that amount will bring them: shew them, that if they live or appear better for a few weeks by stealing or prostitution, they become dreadful losers by the consequence of prison, disease, and other disasters which inevitably follow, and they will fully understand, they will begin to feel something like reason; and if they are convinced, they will never cease to be grateful; because, they will never cease, when again at liberty, to feel the advantages of your instruction. All the evils which infest society are the result of bad education, bad habits, and bad examples: the only remedy is the proper moral instruction, both before and after offences have been committed.

It makes no part of moral instruction to thrust a Bible into the hand of a thief, or of any other person. In the Bible, they find as many or more immoral than moral lessons; and, where any bad propensity is strong, they can gather from this book new food for it. It is the most insane notion that ever was felt and acted upon, to expect that Bibles and Religious Tracts can add any thing to the morality of a people. Moral instruction is a very different thing to what the aggregate of such books exhibit. Industry, cleanliness, mental improvement, and an abstinence from all bad habits, make up the sum of moral instruction: and the Bible no where expressly inculcates any of these

things by a set discourse. Here and there, we have moral scraps alluding to them; but these are not considered the object of Bible reading. Additional improvement is guaranteed by an inculcation of morality without religion.

The most impressive mode of inculcating morality is to make the individual sensible that he is to be a gainer by it. Mankind are but one of many species of animals, and they are born with all the propensities of other animals; you cannot, therefore, improve them more effectually than by seeking to increase the amount of their pleasurable sensations, and by directing them to that end. All pretences of self-denial, all recommendations to mortify the body, are immoral: and the only guide should be, to stop in gratification, where we may either injure ourselves or some other person. Nothing can be immoral that is not an injury or an offence to some other person. This is the species of moral instruction I would have inculcated among mankind; because to this the most ignorant person will assent, as he must understand what is its bearing. Give your prisoner-pupils more of this moral instruction and less of religious lore, and you will add so much the more to their improvement.

I would not dissuade you from your present exertions: in the aggregate, I think them admirable. I desire only to correct your views as to the end of doing the greatest amount of good. Go on, honoured Madam; set to other females the example of benevolence; and shew them, that the proper place for action is, *where the greatest amount of evil and misery is to be found*. Teach them, that to search out the haunts of wretchedness is the way to arrive at a proper knowledge of their own worth: but teach them also, how to fathom and understand the causes of that wretchedness. I attribute it to two causes—bad government, and bad habits, which may be expressed under the terms of bad individual and bad social government. I neither attribute all the evil to the social government, nor all to the indivi-

dual government: though I am fully sensible that the one is the support of the other.

Doubtless, Madam, you are impressed with what is called the importance of religion, and feel as if your dignity is wounded by a contrary supposition; but I should be happy to have the task of reforming you in this matter, which I could do better by conversation than by a letter. To a mind willing to be instructed in what is right and what is wrong, I could offer the most irresistible reasons for the rejection of what is called *religion*: I can clearly shew, that it is the result of the most gross ignorance, and that we only debase ourselves by giving it countenance. I strike not only at the branches, but at the very root; and though I admit myself to be no more of an Atheist than the ignorance of others may impose the title upon me, I can proudly say that I have enough of discernment to see that *there is no such a puny God in existence as religionists imagine and preach*. The Almighty Power, which sustains the universe of matter, I hold to be above human comprehension; nor do I dare to attribute any one attribute to it, beyond eternity and infinity. If this be Atheism, I know that the Theism to which it is opposed must be idolatry: and I pride myself on the opposition: I feel that I am superior to the ignorant idolator.

Christianity, in as far as it relates to Theism or Tritheism, is idolatry as rank as any that was ever practised in Egypt, Greece, or Rome. I can prove this assertion in relation both to history and physics. I have proved it in other parts of this publication; and if there be a man or woman living, who may think me in error, let him or her stand forth and shew it. If you, Mrs. Fry, think me worth an attempt, as a prisoner in need of reform, I beg of you to come freely and quickly; and I promise you a courtesy of manners such as you have not yet seen excelled.

I have mentioned all the good qualities which belong to the Quakers, and I readily grant that they are numerous; so I now come to the second head of my letter and shall en-

deavour correctly to unfold the evils which emanate from their sectarianism or monopoly of interest as a sect.

The principle of sectarianism is abhorrent to the social principle: it must inevitably operate alike against the laws and the welfare of the people as a whole. It is a setting up of a minor species of government; to support which, is wholly a useless and even a mischievous additional expence to the necessary taxation of a general government. It must be hostile towards general government; because no moral legislation can take cognizance of any sect or minor government. The chief part of the political evils of this country arise from the immoral practice of legislating for the gratification of powerful sects. Whatever advantages are offered to one sect; they must operate as injuries to some other sect: and thus a society made up of sects, instead of being an association for mutual defence against the encroachments of another society or a tyrant, carries the elements of hostility within its own bosom, and cherishes the principle of perpetual civil war. It is thus Ireland is distracted: it is thus England and Scotland have been and are now in some measure distracted.

Political sects are equally mischievous with religious sects. They alike result from ignorance and imposture. The Whig is as hateful a character as the Tory: and the Radical or Constitutionalist as both. The Orangeman is not more injurious than the Freemason, nor less so than any other sect whose members are bound by an oath.

Republicans, those who in endeavouring to do nothing wrong as individuals, feel that such a line of conduct is most conducive to the public good, can be of no sect, and must be opposed to all. From those who have more knowledge than themselves, they ask for instruction: from those who are more ignorant, they desire no subserviency beyond a willingness to be instructed. This alone is the principle that can put down sectarianism and teach mankind how to live in peace.

Materialism inculcates the same principle: it defines know-

ledge to be nothing separate from demonstration; and leaves you nothing to disagree about. It has no fables; no fictions; no inventions; no tricks: no impure motives. All belonging to it is the result of the fullest investigation, and supported by the highest existing degree of knowledge. No knowledge can exist separate from it.

It is upon this ground, and under these views, that I invite the Quakers to shake off all their trammels, and to unite with us for free discussion, mutual peace and improvement. No invitation can be more fair, no challenge more polite or more moral.

I highly approve the conduct of the Quakers in refusing to support the priests of other sects, and think, that, in this instance, they set an excellent example. They will soon find that their resistance has been made to a good purpose. The Quakers have certainly set some most excellent examples to other sects; though, in some instances, they carry their opposition to the customs of society too far, and seek to excuse themselves from some of its just burthens: such as that of filling unprofitable offices. Objections of this kind throw the greater amount of burthens on the backs of others; and, therefore, a toleration of such objections becomes unjust.

No kind of religious examples ought to interfere with the political institutions of a community. If this be tolerated, all is confusion: and much of the confusion of this country and Ireland arises from these nonsensical religious scruples. A wise government would know nothing about religion, nor countenance any: and until such governments cover the earth, there will be no end to civil and national wars. Those religious societies, the members of which call themselves *the advocates of universal peace*, are blind to the consequences of their own characters and conduct! Those governments which cherish religion continually scatter the seeds of anarchy and confusion.

I also highly approve the conduct of the Quakers in refusing to take oaths, though I have determined never to lose

any thing by such a refusal, where it is a mere pledge to speak the truth; as the very act of taking an oath is an impeachment of honesty—a *supposition that without that oath the individual would not be honest*. It is at the same time a personal insult and an outrage upon the mind: though any man may honestly take an oath: as a pledge to speak the truth, with or without the help of God, carries no impropriety on the part of the oath-taker. It is the oaths which form religious tests that operate so much to the injury of a community.

If, in addressing you, Madam, I have expressed myself warmly respecting the character and condition of your sect, or of your personal conduct, I have done it with a hope that it will make a greater impression on those who may read. I use strong language with a hope of making them inclined to enquire and to find out their own ignorance. Under the existing system of education, the chief thing an enquirer has to do is, to find out what is the real amount of ignorance that education has imposed upon him: for falsehood is the existing medium of all school education: and sectarianism or the priest rivets what the schoolmaster begins.

This system must be all overthrown as science comes forward with its discoveries and improvements. The man, who values a custom merely because it was his grandfather's, will soon have to lead an unpleasant life; for he will find that the power of knowledge and the progress of science will respect nothing of the kind on the score of its mere antiquity. To be preserved, it must be intrinsically good.

There is another evil arising from sectarianism, and that is, that the most powerful will always persecute the weaker sects. Were the Quakers the most powerful sect in the country, the circumstance would change their whole character from what it is at present: and those passions for power and profit, at the expence of others, which are common to mankind, would predominate with the Quakers. No kind of system will ever effectually change the physical character of man: though some kinds of education may render

him in the aggregate less of a savage. Wherever he feels power, there his natural disposition will exhibit itself; and it is only when a man has power, and is independent of all other powers, that we can judge by his actions as to his real character.

I allow the Quakers to approach nearest to my principles of all the Christian sects, and, therefore, they have less to part with, in advancing to form the one sect of mankind, or in being known under no other distinction than that of a man or woman of a certain town or country. All your talk about societies of friends, and brotherly love, is at variance, with the character of sectarianism. Real friendship, real brotherly love, can only exist with the abolition of sectarianism, and a free discussion that shall make mutual instruction the characteristic of mankind. All sects have no foundation but ignorance. I would scorn the character of a leader of the most powerful sect that ever existed: and when I get my liberty, in preference to that of friends, I shall seek the company of my enemies, or of those whose opinions are hostile to mine. I shall desire them to correct mine if they are wrong, or if they find that mine are right to correct theirs by mine. I see no other means of putting a stop to the direful effects which religion and its sectarianism produce.

I will relate an anecdote, illustrative of the position which I have just taken. I have been just visited by a Quaker Friend. On leaving me, business called him to Weymouth. At his Inn, in company with another traveller, and in conversation, my name came up. The stranger indignant at the sound, exclaimed:—"Ah! he is a scoundrel and I would have him imprisoned for life." My Quaker Friend who knew me in London, and who has had an opportunity of ascertaining my character for many years past, even before I was known to the public, thought the opportunity a good one to expose the impropriety of such rash judgments. He observed:—"What has led thee to form such an opinion of that man." The other paused and could give no direct

answer: but something about religion was the cause. The Quaker, a man of very mild and persuasive habits, drew from his pocket my letter to Butterworth the Methodist; and my Address to the Inhabitants of this County, setting forth the treatment I and my family have had in this Gaol. Some pointed passages were read to the stranger. He admitted that my conclusions were unanswerable; and before long, turned his indignation from me upon the managers of this Gaol: saying: he could not have thought, that in a country, in which it is boasted that Christianity has softened the manners of the people, that men of such bad passions could be found; and eloquently declaimed upon the horrid act of locking me, my wife and sister into one room. He begged that he might be allowed to pay a shilling for the two pamphlets, and lamented before the night, that he could not so arrange his business as to call upon me. It is the company of such men as this that I shall prefer, when I have the opportunity to choose.

I conclude my address to you, Mrs. Fry, with a hope that I shall, by the time you have read thus far, have broken down some little of the prejudice which I dare say you have felt associated with my name. Such a woman as you, I desire to conciliate. I wish to converse with you: to shew you reasons why we differ, and that though we differ in the means of attaining it, our ultimate object is the same: to do the greatest amount of good. I invite you to visit me in this Prison: and if you think I am in error on matters of opinion, I invite you to bring with you the most able opponent that you are acquainted with. I assure you, that all I desire is, to be instructed by those who know more than myself; and to instruct those who know less.

Do not believe, Madam, that I am an object disagreeable to be seen or heard: come and satisfy yourself, that I HAVE THE SIMPLICITY OF A QUAKER, AND ALL THE OPENNESS OF A MAN CONSCIOUS OF HAVING DONE NO WRONG.

I am, Madam,

an admirer of your disposition,
RICHARD CARLILE.

October 21.

THIS day I have received a second visit from the Reverend Mr. Richman. He left me on his first visit, to come again with evidences, that such a person as Jesus Christ once lived in Palestine. He came again, but he had no evidences! and thus the matter rests. Here am I, a four years prisoner, for opposing the ignorance, or for attempting to enlighten the minds of such men! This was an old gentleman and a *particularly learned man!*

I am informed, that a Reverend George Ryan of Stockport tells his congregation, that he can refute my principles: but the reason that he does not is, because (he says) I shall not admit him into my pages with candour. I refer him to my correspondence with Mr Fitton as a specimen of the candour which I promise to shew him. Or he may be informed that he can print his own pages at Stockport.

If I am a prisoner another month, I will address the King and *petition* him to call a convocation of the Clergy, that the question may be set at rest, *whether the Christian Religion be defensible, upon either of its relations—history or physics.* I engage to combat the convocation single-handed.

R. CARLILE.

ANOTHER CLERICAL BISHOP!!!

ON Friday the 17th Inst. a Reverend Doctor Cleeve, Vicar of St. George's Exeter, was tried at the Guildhall, in that city, for an assault on a boy of twelve years of age with an intent to commit an unnatural crime. The case was not altogether unlike that of Jephson's. This Dr. Cleeve enticed

the boy into the fields with some apples, and three young men suspecting his intentions, for he had been long challenged with the propensity, watched him until they saw him forcibly throw the boy down and commence the assault. The lad was brought forward as a witness against him, and every thing was as clear as in Jephson's case: but the Jury retired at 4 o'clock and were locked up till 9 the next morning, in consequence, it is said, of two of them refusing to return a verdict of guilty! The verdict was consequently not guilty! This is the second since Jephson's case; the other is a Rector of some parish in Surrey! Oh! Christians!

but the reason that he does not, because (he says) I shall not admit him into my pages with candour. I refer him to my correspondence with him from as a specimen of the candour which I promise to shew him. Or he may be informed that he can print his own pages at Stockport.

TO THE REVEREND JOHN DAVIS, CERNE.

Dorchester Gaol, Oct.-17, fifth
year of my imprisonment for
being superior to a Christian.

SIR,
I HAVE finished reading Mason on "Self Knowledge," and Erskine on the "Internal Evidences of Revealed Religion:" and herewith return them with thanks for the loan.

Mason's volume contains some excellent moral maxims; but they are confessedly borrowed from the heathen philosophers. At page 63 I have pencilled a note, which says: "Here was morality without religion. Shew me such a Christian:" alluding to Marcus Antoninus.

Your Bible, Sir, is a trumpery book when compared with the morals of Confucius, Isocrates, Epicurus, Seneca, Marcus Antoninus and Plutarch. And whatever it has moral, is evidently borrowed from the much-abused heathen philosophers. It has nothing original but the most extravagant romance.

Erskine's book is a specimen of legal quibbling upon a bad //

cause. A certain number of unproved principles are assumed, necessary to his argument, and then he goes to work upon them like a lawyer with a fifty pound fee.

I overthrow the whole, by telling you and the Honourable Thomas Erskine, *that no such a God as the Jehovah of the Bible has existed.* Prove me in error here, before you move a step.

I never heard of an Erskine who was not a fanatic. The present Lord Erskine, once so brilliant a lawyer, was always on the verge of insanity about matters of religion. I have been informed, that whatever impostor made pretensions to prophetic inspirations, he would be sure to receive the visits and attentions of Lord Erskine!

With all you, serious Christians, the Bible is the *all in all*: like the Koran to Mahometans. You know nothing but what the Bible teaches: and when you hear serious arguments advanced against its worth and validity, you are panic struck: and whilst in a state of insanity yourselves, you treat your opponents as insane!

You ask me to suspend my weekly publication to have more time to attend to religious instruction. Without asking you to give up your preachings, your tithes, your glebes, &c. &c. &c. I will engage to devote three days a week to your company, or to the company of any Christians, Clergymen or not, until you have made me a Christian, or I have un-Christianized you.

I am informed, that, in conversation with an inhabitant of Cerne, you acknowledge that I possessed some ability; but that I was as ignorant of "spiritual things" as one of the sheep in a neighbouring field. I readily acknowledge to you, that I am as ignorant of "spiritual things" as one of those sheep: but I also know, that you know nothing more about "spiritual things" than I do: if you did, you would come and shew me. I am open to instruction: come and

teach a prisoner—an ill-treated prisoner for his opinions—for daring to state publicly what is the extent of his knowledge. You are a magistrate for the county—come and shame your brother magistrates out of locking me up in one room in close and solitary confinement. Do this: or hide yourself and talk no more about your religion.

What can the words, "*Love thy neighbour as thyself*" mean, unless it be that we should mutually support and mutually instruct each other. I am pronounced a bad man because I go about to deprive my neighbours of their religion: but this religion, like infidelity towards it, must be the result of knowledge or of ignorance. Now, you cannot deprive a neighbour of his knowledge; and if his knowledge is superior to yours, he is in duty bound to communicate it: and if you attempt to argue with him, you are sure to be improved by him. All this outcry about infidelity is the result of that pompous ignorance which is offended at arguments because it cannot answer them—offended at the idea of being in error—and with you Clergymen—offended at the thought of losing your rich and easy livings. This is the cause of the outcry against infidelity.

I publicly state to you, that you preach a doctrine which is not true. Now, if you acted upon the principle of loving your neighbour as yourself, you would attend to my dispute of your doctrine; and if you found that my knowledge upon the matter was superior to yours, you would cease to impose that doctrine upon your neighbours: but if you found that your knowledge upon the matter was superior to mine, you would convince me of error, you would not leave me, nor suffer me to dispute the truth of your doctrine; but convince all your neighbours that it was I, not you, that was in error. Instead of this, you shuffle and skulk. You advise your neighbours not to attend to what I say—not to come near me, and even threaten to prevent their coming near

me: This is your spiritual knowledge—your religion—your Christianity.

I am, Sir, your obedient Servant.

RICHARD CARLILE.

THE CHARACTER OF A COMMON BREWER.

BY PHILANTHROPOS.

AUTHOR OF THE CHARACTER OF A PRIEST, OF A SOLDIER, &c. &c. &c.

A common Brewer is a common poisoner of mankind; reckless about the health, the strength, and the happiness of men, so long as his sordid avarice, his cupidity, and his gluttony are gratified; a villain who is actuated by a malignant passion, exasperated by private malice or vindictive resentment, who destroys a man by means of poison is justly execrated, is justly the object of scorn, and unpitied and unmoved he is consigned to condign punishment. If a man is to be the object of scorn, if he is to be execrated, if he is execrated without exciting any degree of pity, or sympathy, for the deliberate destruction of one person, ought not another to be detested and despised in proportion to the number he destroys? Surely multiplication of crime is no mitigation of punishment, the crime is not lessened by insidious circulation of poison, by the poison being infused into the beverage of the devoted victim, and he swallows it unconscious of the latent virus. The present habits of the human mind, its present action and information makes it difficult to comprehend in a proper ratio such a congregation of crime; if the mind of innocence is corroded, if a cold shudder paralyses the intellect at the recital of one man's premature destruction, what must be experienced at the murder of thousands annually, by the Brewers of a factitious beverage. Is the Caffre less criminal who exhibits a poison that operates by slow, insidious degrees; or is the Italian exhibitor of Taffana water less culpable than the midnight assassin who with a poignard instantly effects his purpose; there is more boldness, more manliness, more candour in the latter than the former.

What vindictive ingratitude may sometimes effect, or malicious infatuation occasionally achieve, only stands in the proportion as one is to thousands, compared with the destruction effected by Brewers; under the creditable pretext, under the pretence, of supplying wholesome sustenance, the acrid, noxious, deleterious poisons are administered to honest, innocent, unsuspecting men. The milk of the mother, who drinks the Brewer's

filth, contaminates the limbs and mildews the blossoming cheeks of the infant; the poisoned bowl impregnates the youth and the aged, with disease, fretful temper, and death; what is intended as nourishment, what is intended to renovate and invigorate exhausted and languid man, by cupidity is transformed into a malignant, narcotic, debilitating poison.

Sordid avarice perverts the science of the age and prostitutes the benefits of philosophy. The Indies are ransacked by the Brewers for narcotic and intoxicating drugs, calculated to stupify instead of strengthening; and what the agents of chemistry has extracted from the mineral world, avarice appropriates to its nefarious ends. Every region of the earth, the wholesale destroyer has explored for intoxicating poisons to act as substitutes for malt and hops.

The slow operation of the poison does not diminish the enormity of the crime: it is as criminal to exhibit arsenic in the vehicle of wine as in Taffana water; if intended agency effects the destruction of life it is criminal, and the sum of moral turpitude is the same whether effected in Milan or London.

Sophisticated, fermented, and spirituous liquors, exercise the most dreadful effects upon those, whose vitiated taste lead to indulgence; premature death is only a minor evil. The system of the infant is impregnated, even before birth, by the mother drinking this corrupt, impure and vitiated beverage; emaciated, scrophulous, and rickety, the constitution is broken before puberty is attained; enervation of mind is the consequence of enervation of body: the mind being material, of course it is acted upon by the causes that act upon the body; and such as produce a disease of the body produce a disease of the mind; it is thus that the Brewer's poison destroys the manners as well as the physical frame; and the enormous crimes that are committed in the metropolis of England, and which shock the most distant people, are principally caused by daily libations of the Brewer's poison. If a corrupt ruling faction was not engaged in the commerce of public poisoning, it would be suppressed, and with a system, the most infamous allowed in any country, would disappear much of the moral turpitude so disgusting and shocking to humanity.

Mens sana in corpore sano.—HORACE.

This loathsome poison produces an unlimited number of internal and external diseases; uninterrupted, but a short course of the filth causes a life of misery, of melancholy, and of torture, until death welcomely puts a period to a journey of woe and of suffering, and had it not been for this baneful trash would have been one spangled with the choicest pleasures; such as wish to be distracted with the writhing agony of the gout and rheumatism, or tormented with the hopeless anxiety of hypochondria, or maddening pains of the brain, would do well to pursue a course of misery and of death; but such as wish to enjoy uniform tranquillity of

mind, undiminished strength, health, elegant proportions of the body, and long life, will drink water, the pure, unalloyed, and sanative beverage of nature.

Thus a false, preternatural, and corrupt system of Government contaminates the physical and moral organization of man; it enters into and is identified with the physical evil that daily embitters his existence; individual torture and deformity thus caused is blasphemously attributed to the imperfection of the omnipotent Creator, when it is unequivocally traced to the venal, perverted, and prostituted legislature; can there be any hope of reform while members of the legislative body unblushingly traffic in public poison? Yet such men assume to be conservators of the public health, and morals; can the whole world produce such an instance of prostitution of name, and of office, and of justice? The Common Brewers not only poison, but plunder and oppress the people, and have become a faction so powerful as to influence the measures of the estate.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL.

DEAR SIR,

Sheffield, Oct. 8, 1823.

Be pleased to accept the inclosed presents as tokens of our respect for you and your family, and

I remain yours, &c.,

T. TURTON.

A Reticule from W. Lindley, for M. A. Carlile.

A Penknife with sixteen blades* for R. Carlile from Adam Renwick.

One Case of Razors and Ivory Folder for R. Carlile, from T. Turton.

And a double blade Stag Penknife for W. Campion, from T. Turton.

One Pair of Scissors for Jane Carlile, from Charles Ward.

* Each of these blades has a name on it—and are as follows:—Copper-nicus—Galilei—Newton and Herschell—Mirabaud—Palmer—Stewart and Lawrence—T. Paine—C. I. Volney—W. Cobbett and R. Carlile—Mrs. Wright—Jane Carlile—M. A. Carlile and Hypatia.

TO MR. THOMAS TURTON, SHEFFIELD.

DEAR SIR,

Dorchester Gaol, Oct. 14, 1823.

WE return you, Mr. W. Lindley, Mr. Adam Renwick, and Mr. C. Ward, our warmest thanks for the elegant presents you have sent us; and we all hope, that our future conduct will be as gratifying to you, as your presents for the past are to us. I am delighted with the elegance of the cutlery, and cannot but reflect that the skilful hands by which such work is done ought never to feel poverty. The day will come when the ingenious artizan will quit his workshop for the legislative assembly; and that assembly to return again to his workshop. This is the sort of reform we want. This is the sort of exchange we must make for our present hereditary legislators and hereditary nominators to the House of Commons. No legislation for the welfare of a community will ever be regularly established until the industrious part of that community become the legislators. Those, who legislate and impose taxes upon us, in the present day, have no common interest with the mechanic and the agriculturist, further than as to the means of procuring rent, pensions, and sinecures through their labour. All legislation under such a legislature will tend to squeeze the greatest amount of income from the produce of industry, to be spent by those who live but to spend: who know nothing of production but to consume it. What can be more painful to an impartial observer than to see the ingenious and industrious mechanic in distress: and the useless officers of monarchical state rolling in splendour and luxuries? What can be more painful? What more needs reform? Reiterating my thanks,

I remain gratefully yours,

R. CARLILE.

TO MR. R. CARLILE, DORCHESTER GAOL,
 NOW IN THE FIFTH YEAR OF IMPRISONMENT FOR PUBLISHING
 THE WORKS OF THAT EMINENT PHILOSOPHER, WHO WAS THE
 CAUSE OF AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

SIR,

Mercantile School, Leeds, Oct. 14, 1823.

I now, for the first time, address you in public, and transmit for your use the sum of £2. 0s. 6d.; which I hope will enable you to disseminate useful knowledge and assist you to resist those who oppress you. I hope you will receive it as a tribute from us to your noble undertaking. We want a reform, and the way is to reform ourselves first, (this I have begun) to abandon public houses, and to curb ourselves of those superfluities which pay taxes, which support the corrupt who oppress us. There is another evil, of which we must free ourselves—priestcraft. We must get rid of this evil because it props the corrupt power which oppresses us; and which could not exist another month without its aid. That evil is a curse to society, it is not content with robbing society of its produce, but robs it of its happiness too. There is so much time taken up with teaching religion, from which nothing can be understood, that education is much retarded. I never purposely use a book in my school which says any thing about religion; but I cannot get books quite free from superstition, and I find by this method, my boys make a much more rapid improvement, and are more cheerful. If the time which is spent in teaching religion was applied to the proper school exercises it would be better employed.

I am, yours,

S. ROSS.

R. CARLILE.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
George Sheard	0	6	John Perkin, and Mrs. do	1	0
R. W. Byerley	2	6	Mr. Wood, Hunslet	1	0
R. S.	1	9		1	0
Joseph Kershaw	0	6	W. Driver	1	0
Anonymous	1	0	Joseph Hurlley	1	0
Mary Ellice	0	6			
Thomas Maltby, Putsey	0	6	<i>Received by MR. WARBURTON.</i>		
Joseph Taylor	1	6	William Baxter	0	3
James Longbottom	0	6	Robert Nelson	0	2
W. Dunwell	0	9	Joseph Bently	0	6
Timothy Cormor	1	0	John Warburton	0	3
W. Vary	0	6	W. H.	0	6
Jeremiah Dean	0	6	Thomas Lindley	0	6
Thomas Steel	2	0	James Crawford	0	3
William Knight	2	0	Crispin Lewty	0	6
William Gill	0	3	W. Perkin	0	6
Matthew Sutcliffe	0	6	James Graham	0	6
B. P.	0	3	John Baxter	0	3
Hartley Smith	1	0	John Ainsley	0	6
Joseph Gill	2	6	J. Ramsden	1	0
Charles Button	0	6	James Warburton	2	0
Philip Knight	0	6	Joseph Harley	1	0
George Lee	3	0	Thomas Onan	1	0

TO MRS. CARLILE.
TO MR. SAMUEL ROSS, LEEDS.

Sir, Dorchester Gaol, Oct. 20, 1823.
I AM glad to have a Leeds Correspondent who has set his face against public houses. I am so thoroughly sensible that every unnecessary visit to these haunts lessens a man's worth and respectability, that I would, if I could, make it a criterion of friendship with me, and the characteristic of the principles we advocate, *that a man who wastes his time and his means in an alehouse should not be acknowledged as partaking of the one or the other.* Before I began to think about Reform I always considered respectability wounded by every sitting in an alehouse.

Ours are the best principles which ever entered the head of man. If I knew better I would embrace them. I am therefore anxious that we should associate the best manners with them. A well behaved beggar is a more agreeable companion than a rich and brawling sot. Accept my thanks for this their further support, and believe me,

Yours truly,

RICHARD CARLILE.

TO MRS. CARLILE.

MADAM,

Salford, Manchester, Sept. 30, 1823.

I HOPE you will excuse me troubling you with the following list for insertion in "The Republican;" the sum of which, One Sovereign, was paid to you by me during your stay here, from a few of your friends of the Salford Reading Society, as a small tribute of esteem for your having been as Mr. Carlile observed a greater sufferer in your mind than himself for the cause of liberty and free discussion, and who still bears with great fortitude the heart rending idea of being so far separated from your husband, his whole frame debilitated by so long an imprisonment, and that imprisonment undefined!!!

We hope you will still prefer the honest and wise councils of your husband to the artful and hypocritical suggestions of the corrupt and venal.

To you, Mr. Carlile, his sister, and all the persecuted friends of liberty I shall ever feel indebted.

JOSEPH LAWTON.

Joseph Blondell	2	0	Joseph Lawton	3	0
T. Barton	1	6	John Lawton	2	0
An Enemy to Persecution	1	6	T. T. Monthly, up to June		
William Drinkwater, an		22		2	0
admirer of Paine	2	0	George Longbottom	2	0
Thomas Benbow	1	0	John Foulkes	2	0
J. P.	1	0			

To prove the severity, and absurdity, and injustice of our mode of proceeding as compared with other countries, read the following extract translated from the present Prussian Code.

"WHOEVER, by the publication of blasphemies, causes a general scandal, shall be liable to an imprisonment of from two to six months, and in his prison shall be instructed respecting his duties and the magnitude of his crime."

Here, then, under a perfect despotism, the punishment denounced is perfectly mild when compared with the vindictive conduct of our Judges. It has also an air of sincerity when it speaks of instruction, which no part of the proceedings against blasphemers, has among us.